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THE LATEST VOLUME OF SCHAFF'S CHURCH HISTORY

When the lamented Dr. Philip Schaff came to feel that his days of work were limited, he was greatly concerned to fill in the lacuna between Vol. IV and Vol. VI of his great *History of the Christian Church*. This he first thought to accomplish by securing the co-operation of a number of scholars. When he found that even so the volume would have to be left unfinished, he committed the task to his scholarly son, who is to be congratulated upon its very satisfactory performance.¹ Part V, Vol. I, covered the time from Gregory VII to Boniface VIII. The present volume deals with the later Middle Ages. It was Philip Schaff's original intention to treat the Middle Ages so concisely as to make a single volume suffice. The author found that double the space originally intended would be required to do justice to the subject. Whether after all it would not have been wiser to condense his materials into a single volume is a matter on which critics may differ. The larger limits gave opportunity for many interesting anecdotes and many useful quotations, as well as for the treatment of topics commonly passed over altogether, or barely referred to. On the other hand, the two volume arrangement encouraged a diffuseness of style that is not altogether pleasing. There is much in the manner of treatment that reminds one strikingly of that of the author's illustrious father; but it would be too much to expect equality of merit or of charm. One feels sure that the task has been accomplished in a way that would have thoroughly pleased him who set it. There has certainly been no lack of industry. A careful use of the best materials readily available is manifest on almost every page. Where his authorities differ, one usually feels that he deals judicially and judiciously with the points at issue and reaches conclusions that are well grounded. It would be easy to point out many instances in which a less important matter is accorded more space than a more important. That ten pages should be devoted to Catharine of Siena and less than three to the Bohemian Brethren (*Unitas Fratrum*) could scarcely be justified on any rational ground. The explanation that readily suggests itself is that the author found ready at hand a wealth of interesting materials about Catharine and had never taken much interest in the great evangelical movement that did so much to prepare the way for the Protestant Revolution and whose influence has been perpetuated in

¹ *History of the Christian Church*. By Philip Schaff. Vol. V, Part II, "The Middle Ages, from Boniface VIII, 1294, to the Protestant Reformation, 1517." By David S. Schaff, D.D. New York: Scribner, 1910. xiv+795 pages. \$3.25.

several leading modern denominations. Twenty-three pages are given to the infamous Pope Alexander VI, while Peter Chelcicky of Bohemia, one of the soundest and most evangelical of the religious leaders in the time of the Hussite wars and controversies, is not even mentioned. The great forerunners of Hus, Conrad of Waldhausen, Militz of Kremser, and Matthias of Janow, to whom Neander devoted many pages, are all disposed of in less than six lines, while Thomas of Stitny seems not to be even mentioned. The later Waldensian movement is dealt with in two pages as furnishing materials for the Inquisition, while "Witchcraft and its Punishment" is accorded nineteen pages. While thirty-five pages are devoted to Wiclif, the forerunners of Wiclif and the politico-ecclesiastical events that led to the Wiclif movement are treated in a very stepmotherly fashion. No mention seems to be made of the statutes of *Provisors* and *Praemunire* that played so prominent a part in the Middle Ages and afterward. The reviewer has failed to find occasion for any recognition of the widespread influence of the trade guilds and of secret fraternities in propagating evangelical and rationalistic modes of thought, or of the activity of the Waldenses and Bohemian Brethren in the translation and circulation of the Scriptures. Instances of the omission or inadequate treatment of important matters and of the unnecessary expansion of less important matters could be multiplied. The style is straightforward and lucid, if not elegant. Infelicities occur, but not very frequently. It is scarcely correct to say (p. 489): "In his reverend regard for the papal office Luther did Leo [X] an unintentional injustice when he compared him to Daniel among the lions." Luther knew full well Leo's faults and was consciously using diplomatic language that fell short of his own sentiments, as is clear from the fact that in writing to a friend eight days later he declares that he does "not know whether the pope is antichrist or his apostle, so miserably is Christ (i.e., the truth) corrupted and crucified by him in his decretals." "Reverend" should be "reverent" and "unintentional injustice" is hardly the correct expression for a compliment, however disingenuously bestowed and however ill deserved. On the same page we read: "Artists were drawn from France and Spain as well as Italy, and every kind of personality who could afford amusement to others." On the preceding page we read: "On the other hand, Cardinal H. regrets that the Church has taken a position to it of a stepmother to her child."

But with all its defects the book supplies a long-felt need and will be heartily welcomed by teachers and students of Church history throughout the English-speaking world. If the two parts of Vol. V

could be supplemented by a volume of equal size on mediaeval evangelical and anti-Catholic parties, prepared with intelligent and sympathetic use of the rich materials now available, the value of the Schaff *History of the Christian Church* as a whole would be greatly enhanced.

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PROBLEMS OF CHURCH UNITY

Few subjects in church history have greater immediate interest than those pertaining to polity. Dr. Thompson in the preface of his recent book¹ tells us that this work has engaged his attention at intervals for nearly half a century. The result justifies the time and the effort. His thesis is twofold. He seeks, not in the usual spirit of controversy, to show that episcopacy in origin and history is not the true church polity; and that both in origin and history presbytery is the true church polity. The Presbyterians believe in an historic episcopate. They "find the presbyter-bishop in all ages of the church, in unbroken succession until the present day. At the same time we are not disposed to constrain others to adopt our interpretation in this matter." The High Church party among the Episcopalians finds the monarchic episcopate in unbroken succession from the beginning to the present and would constrain others to adopt the same interpretation. Here then is a difference both in fact and in attitude. The emphasis is especially to be laid on the two attitudes. One is broad and free, the other is narrow and constrained. Having reached this conclusion our author prepares to show his readers the steps in the process. His argument gathers great force from the fact that he relies mainly on history as interpreted by Episcopalians themselves. There is, of course, no lack of Presbyterian scholarship, but he does not feel the need of relying exclusively—the reader sometimes feels at all—upon it. Moreover, he has quoted at considerable length all the passages that have especial bearing on the subject, so that the inquirer has right at hand the material out of which to form his own judgment.

Naturally he begins with the New Testament Age. He finds nothing there to establish monarchic episcopacy, but plural episcopacy

¹ *The Historic Episcopate*. By Robert Ellis Thompson. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1910. vii+317 pages. \$1.50 net.